



GROUND COVER

NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP

October 2013 VOLUME 4 ISSUE 10

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What our Congressmen say about issues of import to low-income people



by Susan Beckett
Publisher

I sought out opportunities to talk with Congressman Tim Walberg (R-Scio Twp, Dexter, Chelsea...) and Congressman John Dingell (D- Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti...) during their summer recess to discuss with them some of the issues we deal with at Groundcover that might be addressed in the coming session of Congress. My thought was that they rarely get to hear directly from people struggling for day-to-day survival and that I would do my best to convey the difficulties they encounter.

What follows is a summary of relevant discussion at a Chelsea town hall with Congressman Walberg and a follow-up with his aide, and the transcript of an

interview with Congressman Dingell.

Congressman Walberg town hall

My question to Congressman Walberg was, "What programs or policies would you like to see changed so that people working full-time, in the United States as well as abroad, could earn a living wage?"

He responded that we have no influence over wages in other countries. Congressman Walberg continued his response with the assertion that eliminating government barriers to starting and expanding businesses was key to seeing wages rise. Citing the law of supply and demand, Walberg contended that an explosion in businesses would lead to demand for workers, and employers would have to offer higher wages to secure the workforce they need, leaving fast-food jobs to teenagers. He opposed raising the minimum wage, as he felt that would discourage hiring.

To my follow-up that his answer seemed, at best, a long-term solution and would not help the many who cannot support their families on their full-time earnings today, he cited the return of manufacturing in Michigan and encouraged people to pursue good jobs in energy and technology fields. After I pressed further, inquiring about low-wage jobs that will continue to be necessary, like nursing aides and store clerks, Walberg mentioned that when workers feel it necessary, they have the ability to unionize.

On other issues, Walberg said that there was plenty of money for SNAP (food stamps) for deserving recipients. He supported benefits for those who need them, saying, "People can and do provide for themselves, except when they can't."

He went on to say that there were \$40 billion in benefits going to able-bodied adults who should be working. Further discussion with Jonathan Hurdy, one of his aides in Washington, revealed that many states have waivers for the work requirement and the thinking is that these people should be working or in job training programs so they will move off the SNAP roles. There is concern

that the number of people receiving SNAP benefits increased dramatically over the last four years. They attribute some of that to outreach programs that encourage eligible people to sign up for SNAP, an initiative Walberg and his allies intend to eliminate. Another initiative on the chopping block makes it easy for people in northern states to claim, without proving it, that they have high heating costs in winter that should be deducted from the calculation of their available income. The rest of the cuts will come from restricting the stores that can accept SNAP payments to those that stock at least three of the four major healthy food groups.

On the topic of healthcare, Walberg feels the Affordable Care Act (Obama Care) is burdensome and supports its repeal. "It is already in trouble; Medicare is already in deficit spending," he said.

He also favors moving to more of a 401(k)-style choice system to replace Social Security for future generations. "Social Security, as is Medicare, is a promise and a promise must be kept," he said.

Walberg also remarked that, while there are better ways of cutting spending, the sequester has not had any disastrous effects.

Congressman Dingell interview

Beckett: The Michigan Senate just passed the Medicaid expansion to reap the benefits of the Affordable Care Act and provide health insurance to thousands of low-income working people in Michigan. Thank you for the many years you toiled to make this a reality.

Dingell: But look at what form they passed it in. There's a couple of peculiar things in it, including one – a medical savings account – for Medicaid recipients. So if you're poor, you have to set up a medical savings account – try to understand that! At least the basic idea [of Medicaid expansion] is good.

Beckett: With all your history of thinking about this, are there other components of health care reform that you think we still need to go after?

Dingell: Well, we've bitten off a huge bite. We've got to chew it, we've got to digest it. We've got to get it in place and we've got to get the people to support it and understand it. We've got to see to it that we get it so the government can manage it... I don't know how many surprises or extraordinary events are going to come up... It is actually going to protect people's right to keep their own insurance but it is also going to assure changes in the way medicine is practiced as we go forward, because, as we hear from medical professionals now, we don't want payment by the job, but we do want to see to it that payment is made by completing the particular health outcome.

Beckett: On another subject, I saw you at the Heritage Festival dedication of the new rail cars. You seemed very enthused about MiTrain. Where do you see the necessary additional funding coming from?

Dingell: It will be hard to come by. We've been trying to bring high-speed rail to this region for quite a while. It must have been 20 years ago, and there was a huge fight among a whole bunch of places [St. Louis and Minneapolis and metropolitan Detroit] as to who was going to get the high-speed train to Chicago... And I said, "This is insane. Why don't we all get together and pull together so we can all get a single, unified rail system?" So that's what Congress passed and so that's what we are working on. And we didn't get much going here until that silly governor in Florida [Rick Scott] decided that he wasn't going to spend ARRA [American Reinvestment and Recovery Act stimulus package] money to get a rapid rail system in Florida. And so Levin, and I and Stabenow, got the idea, why let that money go to waste – if they're going to turn it down, we want it. So we went to the Secretary of

see DINGELL, page 4

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Are we there yet?



by Rev. Dr.
Martha Brunell
Groundcover
Contributor

Again this Labor Day weekend, I traveled to the Mackinac Bridge with good friends for the annual Labor Day Bridge Walk. This walk is a treasured piece of our friendship. Already we have thought of some others whom we would like to invite to join us next year. We follow up the bridge walk with a hearty breakfast complete with delicious pieces of pie. The pie baker makes 75-100 pies a night in the restaurant's kitchen. From the array of pie possibilities, I chose the highest pie, a tasty coconut cream. Our habit is to arrive on Sunday and travel back home on Wednesday, so we have Monday afternoon and all day Tuesday for field trips to Mackinac Island or various sites in the Upper Peninsula.

Tuesday's agenda this year was to include the amber-colored falls of Tahquamenon Falls State Park and the Great Lakes Shipwreck Museum at Whitefish Point. From my vantage point in the middle seat of our rented van, I noticed in a glossy tourist booklet that there was also a lighthouse at Crisp Point. The booklet claimed it was only 13 miles from Crisp Point to Whitefish Point. When I suggested the possibility of adding it to our plans, it seemed a good idea to everyone. I asked about Crisp Point when we were at the state park. The young woman behind the gift shop counter directed me to the literature rack. All of the Crisp Point brochures were gone. When I returned to the counter, the woman there reassured me it was just a few miles, maybe five, once one turned on County Road 500. Well, when we had made

it to County Road 500, there were 11 miles on that gravel road followed by seven miles on a twisty one-lane, sandy road before the lighthouse would come into view. Of course without a brochure and with the assumption we had five miles to cover, we had no idea what lay ahead. It was a long 18 miles across a sometimes rutted road with deep puddles. Artistic smears of wet sand decorated the sides of our white rental van. Cell phone reception vanished. Each time we met a car coming from the other direction, we were encouraged that someone else thought the drive was worth it and we eked out enough space for the vehicle to pass.

On that breathtakingly beautiful September day we did arrive at the lighthouse, where there were brochures describing a remote location on Lake Superior. That it was! The lighthouse tower was open for walking, restrooms were available, and it was a perfect day for pictures. I think only a seagull or a ship could make a 13-mile journey between Crisp Point and Whitefish Point. We and everyone else carefully made our way back out the seven slow, sandy miles and over the 11 gravel road miles to more miles on pavement.

I now have a 5x7" copy of one of my pictures of the Crisp Point Lighthouse in my work folder. It reminds me of the tasks we face that stretch out before us over an undisclosed distance. The picture gives me courage for efforts that will take me or us a long time. It provokes me to ask if a particular journey is worth the trouble, time, and uncertainty. I can still hear our joy when the lighthouse was within sight. It seemed we had been on a treasure hunt with a very minimal map. And the picture makes me smile with the thought of an oft repeated phrase on a long trip: "Are we there yet?"

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October Calendar of Events

October 3-4 – Sleep Out! on the Diag, 7 p.m. (Th) – 7 a.m. (Fri). More info: darrin_g@gmail.com.

October 6 – 2013 Walk to End Alzheimer's, 11 a.m. (registration begins) / 12 p.m. (1.5-mile walk begins). Join 1,000 other participants to raise awareness, learn about the disease, and explore how to get involved. Gallup Park, 3000 Fuller Road, Ann Arbor. More info: www.alz.org, or for events details contact Stephanie Barnhill: (734) 475-7043, sbarnhill@alz.org.

October 6 – 39th Annual Washtenaw County / Ann Arbor CROP Hunger Walk, 1 p.m. (registration begins) / 2 p.m. (walk begins). 1-mile and 5-mile routes to raise funds to end hunger, hosted by the Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice. Post-walk meal to follow. St. Clare's Episcopal Church and Temple Beth Emeth, 2309 Packard, Ann Arbor. More info: www.icpj.net, email bill@icpj.net, or call (734) 663-1870.

October 9 – John Lennon Birthday Benefit Concert for Peace @ The Ark, 7:30 p.m. 6th annual concert featuring outstanding local musical artists playing music of John Lennon and other peace-themed songs. All proceeds go to funding Michigan college students pursuing studies aimed at conflict resolution or peace studies. \$15 general admission. The Ark, 316 S. Main Street, Ann Arbor. More info: www.theark.org, or call (734) 761-1451.

October 10 – Southeast Michigan Sustainable Business Forum / EarthShare Michigan Conference, 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Rackham Amphitheatre. Further details TBA. More info: erb.umich.edu.

October 10 – Panel Discussion: Community Forum on Mental Health, w/ Pete Earley, 7-9 p.m. This first of four community forums sponsored by NAMI of Washtenaw County will be moderated by bestselling author Pete Earley, and will focus on local mental health issues. Free to the public; donations appreciated. Register in advance. University of Michigan Rachel Upjohn Building, Auditorium, 4250 Plymouth Rd., Ann Arbor. More info: www.namiwc.org.

October 11 – Growing Hope Monthly Community Potluck and Sustainability Film Series, 6-9 p.m. A monthly event to cultivate community and engage anyone interested in sustainable communities, urban farming, and

healthy food access. All are invited (including kids) to share in a meal and discussion with friends and neighbors. Film screening of Gus Van Sant's fracking drama, "Promised Land," immediately following potluck (roughly 7 p.m.). Please bring a dish to pass, and RSVP. Ypsilanti Public Library Downtown Branch, 922 West Michigan Ave., Ypsilanti. More info: erin@growinghope.net, (734) 786-8401.

October 13 – 4th Annual Filling Empty Bowls Event, 4-7 p.m. Fundraising event for SOS Community Services to help meet the needs of homeless families in Washtenaw County. Enjoy an elegant evening in a historic home with food, music, drinks, and a silent auction of artisan bowls. More info: email info@soscs.org, or call (734) 485-8730.

October 18 – "Peace Generator" Monthly World-Healing Peace Circle, 7-9 p.m. Join others from all walks of life in silent prayer or focused meditation toward peace, understanding, joy, and healing for your family, the world, and yourself. Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth, 704 Airport Blvd., Ann Arbor. More info: www.peacegenerator.org, or email info@peacegenerator.org.

October 23 – "Take a Chance Tuesday": live & free music at The Ark, 7:30-10 p.m. Food Gatherers benefit concert featuring a historic collaboration between five of the most celebrated acoustic instrumentalists and singers of our time – Noam Pikelný, Bryan Sutton, Jesse Cobb, Barry Bales, and Luke Bulla. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. Free; donations of nonperishable food items accepted. More info: www.theark.org, or call (734) 761-1451.

October 31 – 13th Annual Halloween Treat Parade, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Area merchants welcome little costumed characters to the downtown Ann Arbor neighborhood with greets and treats. Spooky storytelling at the downtown district library at 9:30 and 10:30 a.m. to get in the mood. More info: mainstreetannarbor.org.

UPCOMING:

November 2 – 3rd Biennial Peace All-Stars Concert, 6-10 p.m. Interfaith Council for Peace & Justice hosts the event featuring musicians and storytelling centering around inspiring and promoting the cause of peace. Tickets \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door. Ann Arbor Vineyard Church, 2275 Platt Rd., Ann Arbor. Tickets and more info: www.icpj.net/2013/peace-all-stars, or contact Grace Kotre at gracek@icpj.net or (734) 663-1870.

Dingell on expanding rail service and quality of living

continued from page 2

Transportation, Ray LaHood, and LaHood gave us a large portion of that money. That was when we began to move toward getting high-speed rail between here and Chicago. Some of the track to Chicago has been replaced and we just built some rail between Detroit and Ann Arbor. This will allow us to lop about an hour or an hour-and-a-half off the trip to Chicago. This is one of the steps that has to be taken. With good luck, we'll need a lot more cars than [the ones prepared so far]. The leaders in Ypsilanti are moving to see to it that Ypsilanti, which is a bit behind its neighbors, gets to share in the positive outcomes.

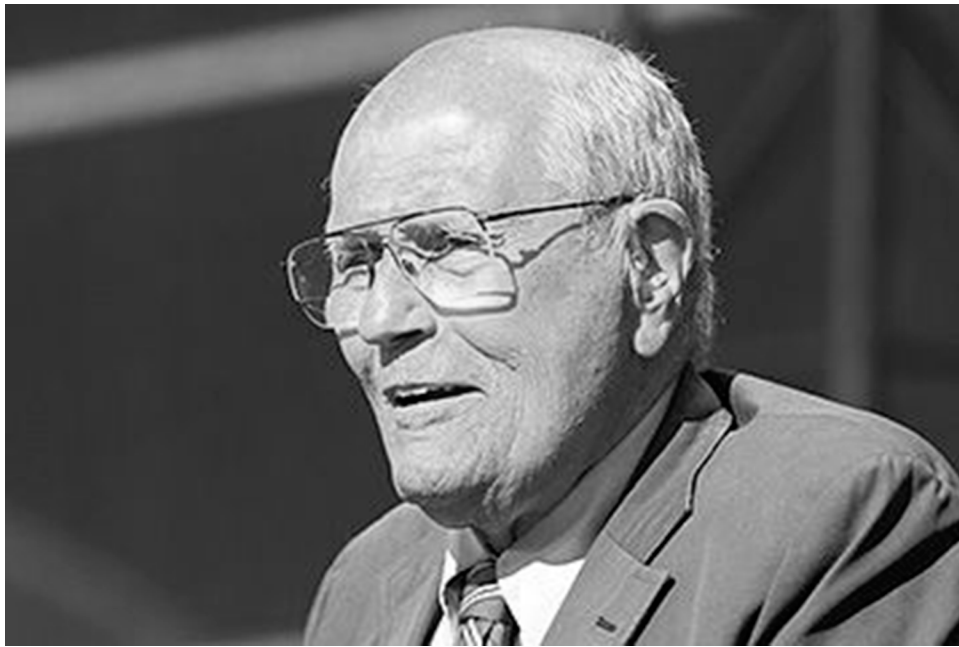
Beckett: My understanding is that there is a shortfall of about \$10 million and that most of that is for more track – for building or negotiation with the freight lines?

Dingell: There is a huge shortfall; we don't know exactly how much. It goes beyond track. Quite frankly, it depends on the time, the place and the logistics of track that you're talking about. There's lots of shortage. There are 14,000 bridges falling down, miles and miles of highways that are obsolete or unsafe; we've got sewers that are collapsing all over the country, we have wastewater treatment systems that are falling behind, obsolete or overloaded or sucking up the Great Lakes; and now we have other problems that are just as bad because almost every item of infrastructure is old and decayed and obsolete and in need of immediate repair.

Beckett: The ARRA got some projects started to address these problems. Is there anything more in the works?

Dingell: No, Congress isn't doing anything except trying to repeal the Affordable Care Act!

Beckett: Did you hear the projection that all property within a half-mile radius of the train stations will increase by 50 percent?



John Dingell (D) represents Michigan's 12th congressional district. Dingell holds the distinction of being the longest-serving member of Congress ever. He's served continuously since first elected in 1955.

Dingell: I don't know how much it will appreciate, but it is almost a certainty. Whenever they put in a subway, or a railhead or a port, there is always a huge increase in property values due to the increased economic activity. You can't avoid that. That's going to come. The problem is that the Republicans only know one word, and that's "expenditure." They've never heard the word "investment."

Beckett: One of the things that concerns me is, what policies do you think need to be in place so the economic benefits from this extend to the working poor and so that people who are living in that area now will be able to continue living within the vicinity of the rail station?

Dingell: I don't have an answer to that. The first thing we have to do is get the project going. There will be no jobs, no opportunity, no advancement for the folks in Ypsilanti until we get those things going. There's an old Polish saying, "Before you sell the bear's hide, you've first got to shoot the bear."

Beckett: This is one of those cases where I wonder how long you can wait before either making some policies or making

make investments in jobs and opportunities and see to it that the average guy has access to purchasing power the way that Henry Ford did, not a five-dollar wage.

It's time to see to it that the ordinary citizen has an opportunity to earn a decent living, by giving him a decent education and a decent opportunity to participate in the good things in the economy, and there are all kinds of requirements like that – like a decent retirement, see to it that he gets a proper education so he can contribute to the economic success of the United States, and be a useful and contributing factor in the workplace to get a decent retirement, decent health care, an opportunity to grow and see that his family is going to be able to live a decent life with him.

Beckett: Okay, let's change gears a bit. I don't think you know anything really about Groundcover, do you? This is to some extent a free-market alternative to address some of the problems that we've been talking about. Groundcover is a non-profit newspaper, published monthly, for people around Washtenaw County, but it is sold by people who have been economically marginalized, many of whom are dealing with issues of homelessness. We give them 10 free papers, they sell them for a dollar apiece – though often people give them more – and whatever they get is theirs to keep. When we train them, we suggest they keep at least half to buy more papers since they will cost 25 cents apiece after the 10 free. We tell them, "Whatever you get is yours to keep. You are independent entrepreneurs. This is your business." It is a form of microcredit, similar to what has been done in Bangladesh and India with the very, very poor there, where they give these people small items like ribbon and suggest that instead of begging they offer people the ribbons in exchange for donations, and this is an entry point into commerce. And so is Groundcover. So it is a way for people to get back on their feet, meet their basic needs, and for those who are ready, to find their way back into the mainstream economy. So that is who you are doing this interview for.

Dingell: You know, in all my years of service, I've tried to see to it that the poor, and the working poor, and people with limited means and limited advantages, get decent treatment and get their share. As we move this forward we will try to see to it that there is a level of benefit that comes to the ordinary citizen. I'm not bothered by anything except for the principal concern of getting the rail service going. Getting us to that point is a major undertaking and to get these things going is the immediate responsibility.

Beckett: What programs or policies would you like to see changed so that people working full-time, both in the United States as well as abroad, could earn a living wage?

Dingell: I'm concerned about people abroad but my primary responsibility is to the folks around here. There's a lot of things. A decent level of minimum wage; it is way too low.

Beckett: What do you think the minimum wage should be?

Dingell: Anything would be an improvement. The minimum wage just has to keep going up to provide workers with a livelihood. They just keep falling further and further behind. And last time we raised the minimum wage we failed to raise it enough to meet what everyone knew was the real need. So, we didn't get the minimum wage up to where it should be. Now, there is more to it than the minimum wage: we have to see to it that people are treated fairly in the world marketplace. We should see to it that we negotiate the proper kinds of trade relationships, see to it that we enforce our trade agreements,

Tax credits and savings plans for low-income workers

continued from page 4

about it before.

Beckett: Well, I'd appreciate you thinking about it in the future and we could revisit the question if we can get together again.

Dingell: Well, I'd be glad to. I'm a fella who's very patient. I'm also a fellow who tries to seize opportunities once they present themselves like health care reform did recently. It seems to work pretty good with environmental laws, food stamps, Medicaid dollars. So, I try to hit those things which have a possibility of a payoff.

Beckett: I know you have been a big supporter of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Tax Credit (CTC).

Dingell: I was. You know, Reagan said that the EITC was the best anti-poverty measure ever passed.

Beckett: I don't know how familiar you are with the Financial Security Credit, but there is another thing we are doing at Groundcover that is similar to it; it is a matched savings program, kind of like a 401(k). In our case, people first go through a financial literacy course and

then we'll match their savings either one-to-one or two-to-one, depending on if it's just general savings or if they're saving for a deposit on an apartment or a critical item to start or increase their business. It has been very difficult, especially for people who don't really have a place to live and they will just start to get back on their feet and then something terrible happens to them – they get thrown back in jail or on the streets and they lose everything, so it is very hard for them to save with continuity.

The Financial Security Credit is now a pilot program in five states, but not Michigan –

Dingell: Is it a state program?

Beckett: No, it is a federally-funded pilot program right now, and it is set up to take advantage of the tax refund people receive from the tax credits. When people file their taxes, people can say, "Put this much of my refund directly into one of the options for savings." It could be six-month CDs, an education savings account or other similar options, and if that money gets saved for at least six months it gets matched and deposited into the savings option the filer chose. I'd love to see it expanded so that it is

implemented in Michigan because I see how hard it is for people to do it any other way. We have made it as easy as we can and for those people at the very bottom, and it is still too hard.

Dingell: We can look into that in D.C.

Beckett: While you are looking into things, are you familiar with Hamilton Crossing?

Dingell: Carl Levin and I saved Hamilton Crossing.

Beckett: Were you familiar with the Eastern Michigan University project last year where they had social services being provided right there, at Hamilton Crossing? It is a model that I think is worth pursuing. It is worth learning more about it and seeing if it can be done on a broad basis. Until you've lived it, I guess, you don't realize how hard it is to go to all the different places they want poor people to go to.

Dingell: I saved Hamilton Crossing four or five times, including rescuing it when some no-good son of a gun walked off with \$400,000.

Beckett: Thank you for doing that. Having low-income housing available is terrific, and thank you for saving it. What I'm referring to here, though, is having someone on site to provide social services at housing complexes like Hamilton Crossing. To act as the intermediary with the Department of Social Services, the Department of Health, the Department of Education, all the bureaucracies that people end up having to deal with, social security...

because what ends up happening, so often, many of the people who are living in those places, they have some kind of disability, and more often than not, some form of depression, and being told, "We could help you if you had this," and then having to go there to get it, only to be told, "It's not really us. You have to go there" – it wears them out.

Dingell: If they come to us, we'll look into it and see how we can help. We have about everything we can deal with here. There are so many issues.

Beckett: I've been doing this for about three years now, and the thing I didn't realize until I was more than a year into it, is how shielded most of us are from the problems that the people at the very, very bottom are facing. We know about it intellectually, but the heaviness of it, the overwhelmingness of it, is just not present in our lives.

And they work so hard! It is not a matter of laziness; it's not a matter of not caring about their families; it's not having the power –

Dingell: It's probably about not having the education, too.

Beckett: You know, some people do, and even with the education, the bureaucracy is really debilitating.

Dingell: I spend a lot of time fighting that. I hope this has served you well.

Beckett: It has, and I hope that you will meet with me again.

Dingell: We'll try to do that.

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Making champions on and off the field: interview with Greg Harden

by Susan Beckett

Beckett: Please describe your role as Director of Athletic Counseling.

Harden: What we've done is try to distinguish ourselves from academic counseling and from sports psychology. The popular piece at this level is sports psychology. Years ago, we decided that not only did we need to have access to sports psychologists, but we also needed to give people a chance to talk about day-to-day living problems, because, really, athletes turn out to be 17- to 22-year-olds; even though they may have different images and people have different expectations of them, they still keep turning out to be human beings, struggling with the same things every other 17- to 22-year-old is struggling with. So, rather than focus on just alcohol and drugs, we decided to get at all the things that would challenge that population. The [athletic] administration and the coaching staff bought me in, and here we are.

How we differ from mental health counseling and clinical therapy is that we don't have six years to do psychoanalysis. We have an athlete who has to perform in a couple of days and wants to become a superior athlete over time. So we have to figure out what is working and what is not working, and come up with an action plan that can get them there. There are two counselors, Barb Hanson and myself, who are available to 900-plus student-athletes – 31 teams – and try to provide them with assistance in managing their daily lives and becoming peak performers. Twenty-nine teams are varsity, and two teams that we have included and treat as varsity are our cheer team and dance team. To cover 900 students is already awkward, but the good news is that what we're talking



New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady and Hesiman Trophy winner Desmond Howard flank their mentor, Athletic Counselor Greg Harden.

about is being available to people who are struggling at the moment – and that is a small percentage.

Other than that, we are doing team training, team education, team building, and all those other things that go along with creating a culture of success.

Beckett: How did you find your way into this role?

Harden: There was a man by the name of Bo Schembechler, who wanted someone to talk about alcohol and other drugs, and I shared with him that one-shot deals were not effective. He then asked me to design something that could be sustained over the calendar year. Several years later, we institutionalized it. We help them see that if your focus is alcohol and other drugs, your focus is on the symptoms, not the person. We put alcohol and drugs into the context of the problems they face. These are just two of the

things that can undermine and sabotage your career. So we'd talk to the teams and ask them to name the threats to a career, and the audience would be brilliant and identify drugs and alcohol as two of the many threats. If you're identified as the alcohol and drug guy –

Beckett: – then nobody

wants to come see you, because others then assume they are having problems with alcohol or drugs – it's just like the AIDS clinics. They have to be part of general health clinics so that people feel safe coming to them.

Harden: I have a community organizing background, so I had a whole different outlook than the traditional social worker or clinician, and this is how you change culture.

Beckett: So why did Bo initially come to you?

Harden: The team physician was asking around for someone who was good at talking with this age group, and my

name came up... The team physician was curious and he referred me to Schembechler as the guy who could come in and do a 30- to 40-minute lecture. I said, "I don't do 30- to 40-minute lectures, unless it fits into a comprehensive model," and he became curious. Basically, Schembechler wanted to know who in the hell said, "No!"

Beckett: What were you doing at that time?

Harden: You remember Beyer Memorial Hospital? I was a clinical therapist in alcohol and drug treatment – inpatient, outpatient, children, families... all of that.

Beckett: Can you share with us any of the common issues of high-profile athletes you've worked with?

Harden: Tom Brady and Desmond Howard were here recently, and they are the poster boys for my program. They are the true believers and have talked about it publicly. I can't talk about specific people without their permission, which I did get from Lexi Erwin.

The common issues are transitions from high school to college; the quest for autonomy and self-definition; adjusting to the role of a first-year student-athlete after being the lead dog – so your role may change dramatically,

see **ATHLETES**, page 10

Case Clothed

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5:00 p.m.
Sunday
7:00 a.m. 8:45 a.m. 10:30 a.m. 12:15 p.m. & 5 p.m.

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Safe harbor from the abusers at SafeHouse

by Jess Salisbury
Groundcover Contributor

A home should be a place of security – a warm, safe spot where a person can rest his or her head and feel completely at ease within the walls. But what happens when a monster lives within those sacred walls?

This is the world that people in domestic violence situations live in. There are a myriad of difficulties faced by people, most often women, with abusive partners. Many feel afraid and trapped in the situation.

Ann Arbor-based SafeHouse Center is one organization working to build a society free of domestic abuse and the fear that accompanies it. The center serves over 5,000 women, children and men and provides counseling, legal assistance, support groups and emergency housing for survivors. There are also 24/7 crisis response teams for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Barbara Niess-May, the organization's executive director, has been working with SafeHouse for 11 years. She is a survivor herself and has been working in the fight against domestic violence



SafeHouse offers counseling and refuge from domestic violence. Photo by Middy Matthews. www.redtinboat.com

for 20 years. Her past experiences were a motivation for getting into the field.

"I felt like, because there wasn't help when I went through what I went through, that more than likely, there is help out there for people and I want to be a part of that," Niess-May said.

An intern at SafeHouse, who wishes to remain anonymous, said that the organization felt like a perfect fit for her.

She, like Niess-May, felt a strong personal connection to the cause due to

her own past relationships.

"I have had bad relationships in the past, and I can tell you that mental abuse hurts a lot more than physical," she said. "It makes you want to help other people when you've gone through it yourself."

Domestic abuse is not a new phenomenon by any means – unhealthy relationships have existed in many forms throughout history, and it occurs in all socioeconomic and racial demographics. According to SafeHouse's Survivor's Manual, abusive behaviors are often learned from family and culture. Restraining, threatening or physically attacking a partner are all forms of abuse, as well as name-calling, jealousy without reason, forced sex and preventing the partner from going out, even just to see family or friends.

Long-standing prejudice against women may be one underlying factor behind society's battle with domestic abuse.

"The fact of the matter is that the vast majority of those who have experienced sexual assault or domestic violence are women and the vast majority – not all – but 90 percent plus who perpetuate it are men," Niess-May said. "I believe that happens because women are still treated as second-class citizens by society."

Not all of the survivors are women, though. As the intern added, "There are male survivors, too."

It can be difficult for survivors of domestic abuse to seek help due to societal associations of being abused with being weak or masochistic. Niess-May added that survivors often feel that the abuse was somehow their fault. Also, the survivor may feel a strong sense of attachment to the abuser. As the SafeHouse Survivor's Manual says, "All survivors want the violence to stop, but not all want the relationship to end. Ideally, they would like the relationship

without the violence."

Additionally, domestic violence can often coexist or be a direct cause of homelessness for survivors. Eastern Michigan University sociology professor Gary Bell explained the connection.

"The survivors remain in danger so long as the abusers can locate and access them – at home, work, school or anywhere else," Bell said. "For that reason, many survivors exit the household altogether and seek safe shelter, often for both themselves and any minor children involved. If they leave their permanent residence and are unable to secure safe, permanent shelter, they may meet the definition of homelessness."

Some survivors witnessed abuse in their childhood. One such survivor is Groundcover News vendor and writer La Shawn Courtwright of Ann Arbor. She recounted being young and observing a family member in a physically and verbally abusive situation.

"I wanted to help them but I was too small," Courtwright said. "It made me confused because I'm thinking as a 5-year-old child, 'How can two people who love each other hurt each other?'"

At age 22, Courtwright entered into a relationship with a much-older man. But things quickly turned sour.

"First, it was a slap, and he says 'Oh I'm so sorry, I'll never do it again,'" Courtwright said. "Then about six months later, he did it again, and this time, it just wasn't a slap. It was a slap and a hit. It knocked me down. After that, he said he was sorry again, buttered me up. Maybe by my seeing that happen before, I didn't know, it was kind of maybe 'normal,' but I didn't like it."

Her first attempt at escaping the abuse came after one frightening incident in their home in front of the couple's children.

"I said, 'I'm getting outta this' because it came to the point where he had beat me up in front of our daughter and son," she said. "And I was on the third floor in the apartment, that's where we were at the time, and he said 'I should throw you out the window,' so I was afraid for my children. He had knocked me in my head, I had knots in my head, my lip was busted and he spat in my face."

The solace Courtwright felt after getting out of the situation didn't last long, though. Her children began asking

see **SAFEHOUSE**, page 9

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		3	6			9			
2	1						9		
9									6
				3	8	5			
3									2
			3					2	9
				5			6	4	
6	4				7	1	8	5	

Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.

Cryptoquote

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CFHLQ C YKATHD'T JHQBSKT ,

KSKAXQWBDU WK EHKT FKZHJKT

QCBDQKE .

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Hint: ◯ = Z

Groundcover Vendor Code

While Groundcover News is a nonprofit organization and newspaper vendors are considered contracted self-employers, we still have expectations of how vendors should conduct themselves while selling and representing the paper.

The following list is our Vendor Code of Conduct, which every vendor reads and signs before receiving a badge and papers. We request that if you discover a vendor violating any tenets of the Code, please contact us and provide as many details as possible. Our paper and our vendors should be positively impacting our County.

All vendors must agree to the following code of conduct:

- Groundcover News will be distributed for a voluntary donation of \$1. I agree not to ask for more than a dollar or solicit donations by any other means.
- I will only sell current issues of Groundcover News.
- I agree not to sell additional goods or products when selling the paper or to panhandle, including panhandling with only one paper.
- I will wear and display my badge when selling papers.
- I will only purchase the paper from Groundcover News Staff and will not sell to or buy papers from other Groundcover News vendors, especially vendors who have been suspended or terminated.

If you see any Groundcover News vendors not abiding by the code of conduct, please report the activity to: contact@groundcovernews.com 734-972-0926

- I agree to treat all customers, staff and other vendors respectfully. I will not “hard sell,” threaten, harass or pressure customers, staff, or other vendors verbally or physically.
- I will not sell Groundcover News under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- I understand that I am not a legal employee of Groundcover News but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.
- I understand that my badge is property of Groundcover News and will not deface it. I will present my badge when purchasing the papers.
- I agree to stay off private property when selling Groundcover News.
- I understand to refrain from selling on public buses, federal property or stores unless there is permission from the owner.
- I agree to stay at least one block away from another vendor. I will also abide by the Vendor corner policy.


Across

- Snakelike fish
- Assist in crime
- Particle
- Imitate
- Fruit
- Pulsate
- Bad time for Julius
- Border
- Wipe out
- Laconic
- Sediment
- Additional to or different from
- Attempt
- Slightly open
- Cut down
- Form of transport
- Vitality
- Fuss
- Study of plants
- Bill of fare
- Napkin
- Quartz used in cameos
- Used to control a horse
- As well
- High mountain
- Fraud
- Each
- Cereal grass seeds
- Paddle
- Aromatic herb
- Fitting
- Champion
- Droop
- Tablet
- Aspersions
- Language
- Residence
- In the middle
- Halo
- Defamation
- Shade of blue
- Pack tightly
- Medieval land worker
- Hinge joint
- Conifer

Down

- Type of duck
- Mineral used as an abrasive
- Not as great
- Simian
- Pandemonium
- Avid
- Woody plant
- Consumed
- Tossed
- Unwritten exam
- Flowerless plant
- Glove
- Insect
- Yield
- Crested bird
- Flightless bird
- Charge
- Animal doctor, in short
- Fit
- Saucer
- Woodwind instrument
- Male hog
- Merely
- Variety
- Coalesce
- Saloon
- Be unwell
- Jump
- Annual grass seeds
- Melody
- Gambit
- Infer
- Tree with conelike fruit
- Person
- Fry quickly in fat
- Pointer
- Chew
- Buddy
- Wading bird
- Part of the ear
- Long and thin
- Facile
- Mischievous fairy
- Staining substance

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Bethlehem Church is home for the Groundcover Office

Sundays:

8:30 am and 10:00 am ~ Worship
10:00 am ~ Church School
(Coffee hour following both services ~ 9:30 am in the Lounge and 11:15 am in the Fellowship Hall)

Upcoming Events:

October 5 ~ Football Parking ~ 3:30 pm game
(If you are going to the game, park here and help support our youth program)

October 6 - CROP Walk
Starts and ends at Clare's Episcopal Church & Temple Beth Emeth
(1:00 registration / 2:00 start - 2309 Packard, Ann Arbor)

October 13 ~ Annual Golf Outing
(2:00 pm ~ Brookside / Saline, MI)

October 19 ~ Football Parking ~ 3:30 pm game
(If you are going to the game, park here and help support our youth program)

October 25 ~ Parking Lot Pretzel Sale ~ Noon
\$10/12 pretzels / \$5.00 / 6 pretzels / or \$1.00 each
an invitation to grow in spirit and serve with joy

Prison: an outsider’s thoughts

by Tansley Ricco

As a child, my brother and I would play cops and robbers. I believed that prison was a place where bad, evil people were placed and that they all deserved to be there. I believed that judges had all proven themselves through years of schooling and hard tests to pass. Also, that the jury system insured fairness to all.

As a teenager, I walked on my long, frayed blue jeans. My friends and I were leery of adults, mad at society. By now, I had found there to be good and bad cops just as there are good and bad Christians.

As I got older, my views about prison and those in it changed. Somewhere along the way I realized that the place was filled with: a) yes, supremely bad, frightening people one doesn't wish to encounter; b) those badly broken along the way who have made horrible choices; and c) those who are innocent and have been unjustly imprisoned.

My adult view of prison is much more frightening than my childhood views.

I am now middle-aged and have a younger cousin incarcerated in a state facility. His friend once again asked for a ride, knowing the young man being asked – my cousin – had a suspended license. He got on the back of my cousin's motorcycle. The state law says you no longer need a helmet. The driver is now head injured; his friend now dead. All that is known is the “bike” swerved to avoid a collision of some sort and that with his skill my cousin managed to upright the bike three times before losing it.

Struggling with memory loss and trying to relearn both physical and motor skills, he is serving five to 15 years in prison. As he isn't receiving physical, occupational or cognitive therapy while there, his wife and four children worry that his muscles will atrophy and that he will never regain needed cognitive skills.

With so many imprisoned throughout this country, it stands to reason that there are many stories like this. What does one do with that?

SafeHouse: a sanctuary

continued from page 7

where their father was, and due to the fact that she did not have a car to take their laundry to get cleaned, her partner offered to help her out.

“When I got there, he beat me up really bad,” Courtwright said.

She was finally able to break free after moving to a different location. She has not had contact with her assailant for years.

“I just don't think people should feel that they should hit or put their hands on someone just because they disagree or they're having a bad day,” she said.

To learn more about SafeHouse and its services, visit safehousecenter.org.

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Easy Cinnamon-Pecan Rolls



by Lisa Sonnenburg

This month, we had a special request from some of our vendors for a cinnamon or pecan roll recipe. Most of these are pretty complicated, but I found one that is easy! (Adapted from Sally's Baking Addiction sallysbakingaddiction.com)

1, 8-oz tube of crescent roll dough

2 tbsp melted butter

Cinnamon

Brown sugar

Pecan pieces

Icing:

1 tsp maple syrup (spend the money and get the real thing)

1 tbsp milk (you can also use soy or almond milk)

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup powdered sugar

Directions:

Preheat oven according to crescent roll package instructions.

Spray 16 tins of a mini-muffin pan with non-stick spray.

Roll out 4 triangles of dough and pinch seams together to close (both sides).

Smooth out seams with a rolling pin until smooth and about $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick.

Brush with 1 tablespoon of the melted butter and sprinkle with brown sugar, cinnamon and pecan pieces. Use as much or as little of the cinnamon, sugar and pecans as you prefer.

Roll dough into a log and cut into 8 equal buns.

Repeat steps 3-6 with the other half of the dough.

Place all 16 rolls into muffin tins.

Bake for 12-14 minutes or until rolls are lightly browned.

While the rolls are cooking, whisk together maple syrup and milk in a small bowl. Stir in sugar until mixture is smooth.

Remove rolls from oven and allow to cool for about five minutes, then spoon icing over warm rolls.

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<p>Ever notice the X-Files was great at showing how minds and technology interact? Like the guy who saw flashing subliminal messages on video displays.</p> <p>TVs and computer monitors are always flickering. What's your point?</p>	<p>One episode had cable TV signals delivering mind-altering sub-frequencies to control behavior.</p> <p>Cable TV is plenty deadly with all the sedentary obesity it induces. Isn't that enough?</p>	<p>Humans rarely settle for "enough". The question is "what's next?" Is the answer the Singularity or something else?</p> <p>It's times like this I'm oddly glad we don't have opposable thumbs.</p>	<p>One especially powerful episode had two cybergunks willingly uploading their lives to a hoped-for digital starmity on the web.</p> <p>I can't imagine anything stronger.*</p>
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*In case we've been too subtle, visit twostrangecats.com to see all the old animals!

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